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UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE CHARLENE BARSHEFSKY AND AGRICULTURE SECRETARY DAN GLICKMAN ANNOUNCE EFFORT UNDERWAY TO RESOLVE U.S.-CANADA BORDER DISPUTE

United States Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky and Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman announced today that the United States and Canada have agreed to engage in intensive discussions covering a wide range of issues affecting farmers and ranchers in both countries. The discussions will begin next week with a view toward finding expeditious solutions to these issues.

Secretary Glickman and Ambassador Barshefsky issued the following joint statement:

"The Administration is very concerned about the underlying severe economic conditions that persist in substantial areas of the U.S. agricultural industry. The Administration is also highly concerned about Canada's agricultural trade policies and practices. We have said again and again that Canada must address these issues in an open and constructive manner.

"We believe that Canada's decision to open an intensive dialogue with us on agricultural trade issues and to suspend its WTO and NAFTA trade actions is a constructive step toward resolving our concerns.

"We have had an on-going dialogue with members of Congress, and Governors from States where agricultural producers have been particularly hard hit, and we are also encouraged by their actions to suspend a series of additional inspection procedures as we undertake this dialogue with Canadian officials."